

PROPOSAL TO IMPROVE WRITING SKILLS USING A WIKI AT CECAR LANGUAGE  
CENTER

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays students are able to understand technological tools as blogs, wikis, and podcast. Education now is immersed in the process of international communication and fusion of cultures named globalization. There has been a big demand on learning a second language using technology as a result teachers need to be ready to satisfy the emergent necessities students have.

Innovative proposals using technology in curriculum have increased, thus technology is playing an essential role in the teaching process, since it provides a considerable number of tools that learners and teachers can use to enhance learning. However, some teachers struggle to connect their practices with the emerging technology. Reasons for this may range from lacking knowledge and expertise on the subject to being afraid of new things, but the reality is that teachers should not neglected the importance of using technology in the classroom as a way to optimize learning processes and motivate learners.

One way of integrating technology into the curriculum is by using many tools that web 2.0 offers. Background on the use of these tools is huge and teachers are able to choose from a wide range of options according to the educational aim the students must achieve. In language learning, web 2.0 has been a great help in the development of language skills and the enhancement of interaction among teachers and learners. An important web 2.0 tool is the wiki which gives opportunities to enrich students' practice of collaborative learning and to develop skills that are in demand by employers.

The innovative element in English program is the implementation of Wiki. It will be used to create a learning environment that helps improve writing skills.

The subject of this study is CECAR , a private language center of Corporación Universitaria del Caribe in Sincelejo –Sucre. This context was chosen because the level Low B1 students.

This work will be divided into the following sections: the first one will be address rationale, the second section Theoretical Framework will be based on collaborative learning, cooperative learning and constructivism.

Then, the explanation of the proposal, results triggered in the piloting process and some conclusions will be draw at the end of the proposal.

## **2. RATIONALE**

### **2.1. The Importance of New Technologies in English learning process.**

New technologies are currently the center of students' attention and youth in general. Technologies such as social networks, blogs, wikis and others have become common nowadays. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have definitely transformed business processes and organizations, created a worldwide network of e-commerce, and turned the domain of entertainment into a fascinating experience. Given these features and how attractive new technologies are, young people now spend much of their time outside the classroom interacting with others. Therefore, initiatives that seek to support the teaching practice by using these technologies take more strength every day aiming at students spending more time on academic activities in an environment that is familiar and appealing to them.

As O'Hara (2008) pointed out "pedagogy still has to catch up with resources in order to get the most out of technology" (p. 29). The government in Colombia has noticed the importance of new technologies and has decided to include them as a relevant part of the learning process, partly as a way to raise students' motivation and interaction with learning. One of the actions of the National Ministry of Education (MEN) in the process of educational revolution is the National program in educational innovation (Revolución Educativa- Programa Nacional de Innovación Educativa) with the use of media and ICT in higher education. This is triggered by the National Plan for ICT 2008-2019 issued by the Ministry of communications which states that, for the year 2019, all Colombians should be connected and informed making efficient and productive use of ICT for achieving competitiveness and greater social relations.

Colombia has worked in the use of ICT in education under the leadership of the National Ministry of Education (MEN). In order to incorporate these technologies as a strategic axis in pedagogical processes, to improve quality and ensure the development of basic, professional and occupational skills, the MEN created the Strategic Plan for ICT incorporation in 2002. This program promotes the use of new technologies and media programs for institutions of primary, secondary and higher education. With the support of the Universidad de los Andes, the program provides accompaniment to higher education institutions interested in the strategic planning of educational integration of ICT. PLANESTIC also aims at creating settings for blended education, a type of education that involves face to face and virtual instruction, enabling the use of technology in higher education programs of universities throughout the country.

CECAR is not reluctant to this ministry policy since the program has been granted a significant role in the development of curriculum contents.

In 2009, Corporacion Universitaria del Caribe (CECAR) made its Strategic Plan for incorporation of ICT, which is a favorable setting to all those initiatives designed to boost processes of teaching and learning through ICT. Currently, CECAR is in the process of implementing PLANESTIC, to incorporate the use of ICT in academic and research processes, which exposes an ideal scenario for those initiatives that seek to streamline the process of teaching and learning using technology for information and communication to strengthen the traditional processes of teaching and learning by relying on virtual education, that means passing programs of traditional distance education to B-Learning mode ( Blending Learning Mode) and to offer new distance education programs in eLearning mode.

Regarding research on the use of ICT in the classroom little is known about this subject in CECAR. There is only one piece of research about wikis that has been developed by students as thesis to graduate from the different programs such as Basic education with the emphasis on



technology. However, there is no registration or documentation that shows the existence or completion of any action research where new technologies are implemented in the curriculum.

## **2.2. Description of the context**

The proposal will take place at Corporacion Universitaria del Caribe-CECAR, a higher education institution which headquarters are located in the city of Sincelejo. It was founded on July 26, 1976 by a group of university professors of Cordoba and Sucre. CECAR offers undergraduate, on-campus post graduate, and distance programs, and language courses through the language center which offers a variety of them. Those courses are organized by levels.

The mission of CECAR is the integral formation of its community at the technical, technological and professional levels. CECAR is committed to sustainable human development, regional autonomy, the Caribbean culture, entrepreneurship and social leadership, through the integration of teaching, research and social scope.

In 2009, CECAR began the process of formulating their ICT Strategic Plan through the involvement and participation of the National Ministry of education PLANESTIC. The strategic Plan for integration and Use of Information Technology and communication (PETIC) developed by the university meets the guidelines of the Institutional Education Project (PEI) in strategic sectors “Strengthening the service of Education and institutional Development”. This seeks to improve conditions for academic service delivery.

The fact that CECAR is implementing its Strategic Plan for the Incorporation of ICTs into the learning processes (PLANESTIC) represents the best scenario to innovate and enrich the teaching and learning processes making use of technological tools and resources. This is

supported also by the vision of PLANESTIC that states that by the year 2012, CECAR will be recognized in the Colombian Caribbean, for offering pertinent programs with high quality in its academic, research and social scope processes; supported by the effective pedagogical use of information means and technologies. CECAR's Language Center is not alien to this reality. Therefore, this proposal seeks to establish a ground base to improve the teaching and learning processes through the use of technological tools.

### **2.3. The Status of Writing at the Language Center**

The language center is organized by levels. It has 2 courses in each level: A1, A2 as basic; B1, B2 as intermediate; and C1-C2 as advance. Two years ago there were not any specific processes to develop writing skills at the different levels of the course.

In 2012, each level was divided in two sub skills: Grammar and Skills. Grammar contains the reading, writing and structures, and skills are organized based on listening and conversation.

Concerning writing, it was a little neglected due to the fact most of the teachers did not develop a careful process. The syllabus proposed by the books had some activities that included writing. Some teachers tried to explain some assignments from the book, such as writing a letter, but without taking into account the steps that a writing lesson should contain.

### **3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1. Constructivism theory**

Constructivism approach for learning focuses on the idea that learner can construct their own knowledge through their experiences and by performing authentic tasks. Those activities require that students interact with the environment in order to stimulate active learning (Jonassen, Car and Yueh, 1998).

Constructivism theory is divided in two types: sociocultural constructivism and cognitive constructivism. According to Duffy and Cunningham (1996), sociocultural constructivism emphasizes on the different situations which occur in a social and cultural setting, while the cognitive constructivism stresses that students' learning arises within the individual's constructions.

On the other hand, according to Hein (1991) there are some principles in the constructivist theory that are relevant for learners to develop thinking skills. Those are:

- Active process of learning: The learner needs to have enough input in order to start the process. It is necessary to engage learner with the world.
- Learning as construction of meaning and constructing of system of meaning: Students learn new knowledge the same way they have learned before.
- Learning involves language: People need to use their language to learn.
- Learning is a social activity: Students need to associate with other human beings, teachers, peers and family.
- Learning is contextual: It is relevant to put the knowledge in context; it cannot be isolated from theories and facts.

- More knowledge is necessary to learn: The more learners know, the more they can learn.
- Learning is not instantaneous: It takes time; it is essential to check the ideas several times, try them and use them.
- Motivation is a key component in learning: It is crucial for learning because students feel motivated.

Another author that emphasizes that the environment influences student's active learning behavior is Von Glasersfeld (2005). He emphasizes on the use of a setting which can stimulate active learning. It is more difficult to learn if the environment does not provide the necessary conditions for learning. This, of course, demands great knowledge of the learners from themselves and from teachers. The more you know about the way you learn, the more you can set the environmental conditions for learning. Similarly, the more teachers know their learners, the more easily they can create learning settings for them.

Teacher also plays a relevant role in enhancing an active learning process because the design of the activities and strategies should be enthusiastic and motivating allowing students to think and reflect upon them. Some tasks that involve the constructivist principles are questioning and discussing (Fosnot, 2005). That means constructivist theory engages students in real situations, taking into account the context in which they are interacting with each other. Additionally, the use of authentic tasks allows students to have the opportunity to build their own knowledge.

Some of the theories that underlie Constructivism derived from Piaget and Vygotsky's model.

### **3.1.1. The Piagetian model**

Some of the pedagogical models are based on the theories derived from Jean Piaget (n.d). He claimed that learners construct their own cognitive worlds and ideas taking information from the environment. The learner should be active due to the fact he/she is not an “empty vessel” to be filled. He also explained that learners have 4 different stages for cognitive development, namely: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational and when they pass from one stage to the other, they can change their thinking and adapt it to the new ideas of the worlds. So, the ability to learn content is related to the stage of the development. In relation to this, Brainerd (1978) introduces the readiness approach which emphasizes on the idea that students cannot learn new information without having the maturity level to do so.

Taking into account the proposal which is related to the improvement of writing skills through the use of the wiki, this model guides all the process for the group, because it lets to organize better the pair work, so they can explore, play and enjoy according to their interests and their cognitive level.

### **3.1.2. The Vygotskian model**

On the same train of thought, the Russian psychologist Vygotsky (1978) developed the theory of the Zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is defined as the difference between the learner’s actual development level and what they can achieve with the help of other peer. This idea emphasized that humans develop higher cognitive levels when the gaps in their thinking and problem solving are supported by adults, peers, or more capable others.

According to Vygotsky (1978) it is essential that a learner develop some internal processes that occur only when he is interacting with people in his environment. Therefore, this theory served as a foundation to make a natural and less structured class, where students can

communicate and have real experiences in the learning process. That means it is necessary to promote social interaction between students, teachers, and peers to make students become active learners. Besides, the Vygotskian model helps learners to acquire societal knowledge and skills because they also interact with their context. In this social interaction, it is relevant for the teacher to know the group of students, so they can play with different grouping techniques to get the most out of students' abilities. In order to develop constructivist activities in a wiki, it is necessary to group different styles so that learners can help each other and develop successful tasks inside the wiki.

### **3.2. Cooperative Learning**

Cooperative learning (CL) is a process in which students can work together in different tasks in order to help their friends and themselves to complete them. Thus, learners cooperate with each other developing tasks (Millis and Cottell, 1998). Through cooperative learning, students can also improve comprehension and production skills due to the fact that students feel more confident in making mistakes at the moment of working with their friends, and they make use of friends' skills as an advantage in order to do an activity (McGroarty, 1989). On the other hand, Johnson et al (1996) claim that the use of small groups through cooperative learning exploit their knowledge and teams' learning. They can build team working skills and responsibility since every member of the group has specific tasks and the performance of the team depends on all members complying with the assigned tasks in order to achieve a group goal.

Taking into account what cooperative learning looks for, it is relevant to mention that there are some specific activities and methods in a lesson using this approach. Some of the

cooperative learning methods are three-step interview, talk-pair and inside-outside circle. These methods allow the production of appropriate output from students who are learning a language ( Kagan, 1995).

Sharan (1980) points out that in the learning process it is necessary to change the students' role in order to help them become active participants. The teacher can therefore be a passive listener. He guides learners and gives them the appropriate input to generate effect and motivation to participate without feeling any pressure.

Furthermore, taking into account that students become more involved in discussions developed in class, they also demonstrate enthusiasm to share and they look happy, it is factual that Cooperative learning helps other areas of education such as students' self- esteem, linking for school, and inter-ethnic relations (Johnson et al, 1990). Thus, teacher should provide the necessary tools to cultivate mature, happy and productive members of the class.

On the other hand, according to Jacobs et al (1997), there are some characteristics that make cooperative learning successful, such as: positive interdependence, individual accountability, collaborative skills and classroom management. Positive interdependence refers to the fact that students should help others members of the group as they help themselves, in this way they can be more concentrated on the activities. Individual accountability means that each student has the same responsibility than the other members for participating and learning from the activity. There are several ideas to know if students accomplished the activities. Some of them are oral quizzes and written summaries, all of these at the end of the work (Kagan, 1989). Collaborative skills are essential because students need to know how to discuss in a group, give appropriate feedback and suggestions in a way that classmates do not feel frustrated if they do not

perform any activity correctly. Schultz (1999) called them social skills and expressed that they need to be taught by the teacher in an accurate way. The last characteristic is classroom management and it is about the way in which students are organized in the different groups.

Research shows that cooperative learning is being used more than traditional learning because with this approach learners have better performance than with the traditional one (Stevens and Slaving, 1995). There are various differences between traditional and cooperative learning. Most of the time in the first one the teacher guides all the class talking up to 80 percent of the class time and students are only limited to answer the questions if they know the answer. On the contrary, in the cooperative learning students are in a team and if they have any problem with the activity they can ask other member of the team and then participate. Thus, students' language output increases while the amount of teacher talk decreases. That means that the emphasis of this theory moves from teacher-centered to student-centered. Students are given a task and they have to identify a possible solution by themselves and at the same time help the others.

There are three different grouping techniques in cooperative learning: base, formal and informal. In the first group, the teacher knows the learners and chooses those who are isolated in the group. They can be placed in groups of two or three. The main idea is that students integrate with the others. The activity can take weeks, months, a semester or a school year. In formal groups, the teacher chooses or assigns the groups based on the academic ability; taking into account the low, medium and high achievers. These groups are together for a complete unit. The last one, which is informal groups are randomly selected by the teacher using different methods. Students stay in these groups for one day or two (Jones, 1994).



Cooperative Learning (CL) does not just mean sitting students in small groups and giving them certain amount of activities to be developed. The idea is designing appropriate tasks that involve language (reading, listening, writing and grammar and speaking), social and cognitive skills. It is here where the learning pyramid plays an important role. As Howden (1995) explains, it is the relation between the ways students learn and the material learned. The learning pyramid shows that seen from the top down, it starts from the lecturing to teach others, with students moving from passive observers to active participants increasing their involvement in the process. The following diagram shows the pyramid of learning.



Figure 1 Learning Pyramid

### 3.3. Collaborative Learning

One of the pioneers of collaborative learning (CL) was Benjamin Franklin, when he started promoting the autonomous learning groups. Since 1990s, Collaborative learning has been

drawn attention in the educational organizations with the changes from instructional focus to learning focus (Barr and Tagg, 1995). This trend has led to the emphasis on increased group work in the classroom and the awareness of the importance of placing learning at the center of the process from the part of administrators and teachers.

As Zhu (2012) claims, CL plays one of the most important roles in the construction of knowledge because when students interact in learning communities, they can create, share information, practice critical reflection, negotiate meaning, test synthesis, and build consensus about the topic they are developing. Thus, they can enhance knowledge construction.

Collaborative learning can sometimes be confused with cooperative learning, because the second one also occurs in a group of students who interact to complete or achieve a goal in a task. Students can work in and out of class using technology and looking for new information in order to finish a writing task. Nagata and Ronkowski (as cited in Ann Noble, 1998) differentiate those concepts stating that small group projects is collaborative learning and group work is Cooperative learning. According to Noble (2000, p.10), some of the characteristics of Collaborative learning are:

- Cognitive skills such as the ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information.
- Critical thinking and problem solving skills.
- Numeracy, literacy and visual communication skills
- Skills in interpersonal understanding, with the capacity to communicate effectively and to work both independently and cooperatively
- A commitment to continuous learning.

In addition, Gerlach (1994) states that Collaborative learning is a natural process in which participants exchange ideas among them. With Collaborative learning, learners work as a team to solve a problem; also, argumentation among students can be promoted.

Technology can also enhance collaborative work. This space lets students feel free to work at their pace, sometimes in classroom activities students do not have time to help with the classmates' work, but in a collaborative online setting they have the chance to do so (Hewitt and Scardamalia, 1998). Learning is made from interactions and dialogues with other students and sometimes with the teacher. Additionally, in order to design the collaborative activities in a group it is necessary that the activities be motivating for the students, they have to develop critical thinking skills in the learners, and the students are active and dynamic while they are acquiring new information.

### **3.4. Differences between collaborative and cooperative learning.**

Although both are founded on constructive epistemology, there are a few differences between them. You can see them in table 1.

Table 1 Differences between Cooperative Learning and collaborative Learning

<b>Cooperative learning</b>	<b>Collaborative learning</b>
Positive interdependence with structured Goal	Advocates structure and allows students more say if forming friendship or interest groups.
A clear accountability for individual's share of the group's work through the assigned of different roles in the group.	The instructor once the task is set, transfers all the authority to the group. Group task is always open ended.

Deals exclusively with traditional (canonical) knowledge	Ties into the social constructivist movement
Does not empower students	Does truly empower and braves all the risks of empowerment

Taken from collaborative versus cooperative learning-a comparison of the two concepts (Panitz, 1999)

Likewise, Rose (2004) explains that there are two points in which Cooperative Learning differs from Collaborative learning. They are the degree of learning structure and the degree of teacher involvement. In cooperative learning, teacher is more organized and the activities are more structured whereas in collaborative learning the teacher is less involved promoting more students interaction in the activities.

### **3.5. New Technologies in the Teaching of English Language**

The traditional teaching has been changing with the entry of technology. These tools can be utilized to address students' learning styles, since nowadays they like visual and auditory activities. Globalization has influenced the spread of English around the world, so this new period of time demands a lot of challenges and responsibilities for the teacher. As graddol (1997) exposes "technology lies at the heart of the globalization process; affecting education work and culture" (P. 16)

Technology in English language teaching provides many opportunities for making the teaching more interesting and meaningful to students. The term new technology is an umbrella term that includes text messages, chat, posts, etc. Since the 1980s these technologies have been playing an important role in our daily lives, simplifying and making a different process in which we are more effectively involved. Everyday technology is rapidly increasing, so teachers have to

keep up and integrate education and technology. National Middle School Association exposes that future students require a set of abilities that are necessary to develop (DiBlasi, 2010). Some of them are “global awareness, communication, teamwork, collaboration, critical thinking, problem solving, and data mining” (p. 2). That means that information and communication technology (ICT) is being incorporated in the educational fields with the idea that learners can be prepared not only for getting a job, but also because the use of these tools helps them to face the problems of the real world. Taking into account those issues, it is relevant that teachers transform their teaching practice in which they are accustomed to using the same books year after year. With the emerging of new technology it is basic to prepare learners for future situations. There are eight main points for the successful integration of education and technology, they are: fear of change, training in basics, personal use, teaching models, learning base, climate, motivation and support (Bitner and Bitner, 2002).

**Fear of change:** Some teachers are afraid of using new technologies, because they think it is complicated and difficult.

**Training in basics:** The teacher needs to have the basis of the computer use. It is important to start by knowing the simple parts; mouse, printers, etc.in order to familiarize with them.

**Personal use:** The use of technology in their daily activities with programs such as word, and power point, help them to get familiar and feel more comfortable.

**Teaching Models:** Teachers who do not have the ability to understand and use technologies, need to follow good models to incorporate the technology in their classes and feel confident.

**Climate:** This involves the teacher feeling free to create spaces and to integrate parents, students, and colleagues in their job. The teacher should be motivated to learn and use the technological tools.

### **3.5.1. Wikis**

It has been said that wiki is a social software that allows people to add, delete and edit information. Members of a wiki can post text, images and videos. This web tool promotes collaborative learning and encourages reflection in the learning process of students since they have the opportunity to share what they know. It provides learners with ample opportunities to participate actively in the design of their own learning.

English teaching can make significant learning opportunities out of traditional learning with the use of the wiki. It is used for webquests, collaborative projects, coauthoring of essays or reports, interactive games, planning for a class event and online study communities. The function of the wiki can generate content, results or another page.

Elgort et al (2008) mentions the advantages of the wiki, among them, promote collaboration between members of a group in different assignments. Also, they encourage discussion and let students feel comfortable with the tools. Based on the concept that wiki is a collaborative learning approach, it is relevant to mention that students using wikis are active producers of the content and they can construct knowledge helping other members of the group, and in this sense they create learning communities (Engstrom and Jewett, 2005).

Concerning the type of activities, Hsu (2007) names examples of the activities that can be included when educators design a wiki. Those are: brainstorming activities, group discussions, knowledge base creating, and collaborative writing.

### 3.5.2. Principles of a wiki

Wikis can serve different purposes (e.g. business, education, marketing). However, no matter what the objective of the wiki is, it should follow certain principles in order to design it. The following chart shows the principles of a wiki and describes their characteristics.

Table 2 Principles of a wiki

Open	If a page is found to be incomplete or poorly organized, any reader can edit it as he/she sees fit. Wiki is based on open-source technology.
Incremental	Pages can cite other pages, including pages that have not been written yet.
Organic	The structure and text content of the site is open to editing and evolution.
Mundane	A small number of (irregular) text conventions will provide access to the most useful (but limited) page markup
Universal	The mechanisms of editing and organizing are the same as those of writing, so that any writer is automatically an editor and organizer.
Overt	The formatted (and printed) output will suggest the input required to reproduce it. (For example, location of the page.)
Unified	Page names will be drawn from a flat space so that no additional context is required to interpret them.
Precise	Pages will be titled with sufficient precision to avoid most name clashes, typically by forming noun phrases.

Tolerant	Interpretable (even if undesirable) behavior is preferred to error messages.
Observable	Activity within the site can be watched and reviewed by any other visitor to the site. Wiki pages are developed based on trust.
Convergent	Duplication can be discouraged or removed by finding and citing similar or related content.

Taken from Wagner (2004, p. 270).

As it was stated above, wikis are designed to suit different purposes and various scenarios. The wiki designed for this proposal is educational in nature. Tomkins (2005) identifies four different forms of educational wikis:

- **Single-user wiki:** This model lets one person read, look for information and edit his or her ideas using a web page.
- **Lab book wiki:** it is used by students who want to share, review and change notes they kept in an online environment.
- **Collaborative writing wiki:** it contains a versioning system in which students can edit, check and change information written by the other members. It is ideal to work with teams developing writing skills.
- **Knowledge base wiki:** A place to collect knowledge in a fast and easy way. It needs an efficient search function.

To sum up the emphasis of wiki pages is teamwork, in which learners develop a continuous process of reviewing, checking, editing, and testing (Wagner, 2006).



### **3.5.3. Research Findings on wikis**

Since 2005 until now, many studies have been working on the use of new technologies that will help people to enrich their own knowledge in educational process. Recently, some researchers have been interested in the use of some tools; one of them is the wikis. Most of the studies have focused on the development of writing skills, focusing on the exploration of strategies and appropriate practices in the different levels of the education. The research findings on wikis were found in different places around the world.

In (2008), Chen carried out a piece of research in which she wanted to apply wikis in an EFL class in a technological university setting in Taiwan to examine whether incorporating wikis is beneficial to students' learning, to document the changes of students' attitude towards language learning, and to investigate students' experience using wikis as well as the communication channels they use. The participants were divided in two groups experimental and control group. The experimental group outperformed the control group academically in terms of listening comprehension and reading comprehension. Participants in the experimental group were more satisfied with the instruction, improvement of language skills, and cooperative learning to support their learning.

The wiki had a simple, convenient, low complexity, and user friendly atmosphere for completing group projects. Students in general had a high technology self-efficacy in the wiki environment. Even though there were some limitations such as the time line to apply and finish the project, and the lack of training in the use of the tools, the results show that there was a difference between the groups (experimental and control) during the listening and reading activities, the first one had better performance. The students were satisfied with the use of the

wiki tool; it was easy and helped them to develop collaborative projects. The wikis let that students learn one from the other, communicate in a simple way and manage all the activities.

In another study conducted by Kovacic et al (2008) at Zagreb university in Croatia, focused on a new strategy called E-tivity (online learning activities) which had different goals as to examine the appropriateness of wiki technology in English for specific purposes (ESP) and English as a foreign language (EFL) at the university level. It aimed at encouraging students in collaborative and online activities, and distributing projects on the wiki web page. The findings showed relevant results with the creation of a place where students expose their writing and other texts, the project contributed to improving their lexicum and to motivate the search of knowledge with a task that they called “Engwiki”. The developing of online learning activities was a means for students who were interested in having a better performance in their English lessons. They could participate and define the topics of their curiosity; so those topics helped them to feel more comfortable at the writing and correction time. The Engwiki was pretty easy to work on, and sometimes it depended on the students’ technological skills.

Another relevant project was done by Franco (2008). His work aimed to articulate the relationship between collaborative learning and the employment of wikis by inquiring the relevance of using a wiki with the purpose of peer correction and students’ development of writing.

The results indicated that students’ attitudes towards writing was positive, they were more attracted to participate in online communities. Teachers were only a guide and students became constructor of their own learning and responsible of classmates’ correction. Most of the positive results were from the learners, they felt really good with the writing that they produced, and the students with poorly developed writing skills were more aware of their mistakes because of peer

correction. Learners accurately developed their social skills in the sense that they thought about cooperating instead of competing.

A wiki implemented by Witney and Smallbone (2011) tried to appraise the learners, support activities in collaborative environment, analyze the effect of using wikis in group assessment tasks, and to make recommendations for supporting students' development of e-skills and group working skills. Some of the limitations regarding this study were the small number of students that participated who had different ages, hobbies, preferences and geographic contexts. Besides, the use of the tool was not mandatory for all the students. For that reason, it was difficult to show the completed results.

Other findings show that the assessment process in a collaborative way need to be organized, structured and encourage students to work cooperatively within any strong critique on students' activities, the idea is for the students to help each other as a group. The suggestion of this research is that it is necessary to develop more studies with the implementation of technology and also the integration of new technology tools in the assessment program.

Teachers' results showed that it is fundamental to support learners in the new experience of the virtual learning environments and it is necessary that teachers combine it with the traditional face to face models. An important issue that the project showed was that in order to improve learners' group work, it is necessary not only to design a collaborative task, but also to provide them with the appropriate skills to develop.

In contrast with the last ones, which focused on the implementation of wikis to develop writing skills and collaborative work, in this study students investigated the simultaneous use of three online writing tools, as forums, blogs and wikis taking into account the necessities and realities of the learners today (Miyazoe and Anderson, 2009). In the study, the authors wanted to

use those tools at the same time to measure the students' opinions and learners' outcomes. To do this, they needed to classify the characteristics of the mediums into forum, blogs, wikis.

The findings suggest that students at the beginning had problems to accept the new online methodology due to the fact that they were accustomed to the traditional classes. After the activities, they became better partners in team work. Regarding students access to various tools, it is important to introduce the new technologies with carefulness. The study explains the utility the students found in each of the online writing tools and observed general success in making qualitative changes in students' writing abilities. The results from this study showed the wiki system with its full collaboration potential. Any learner can take advantage of a wiki, regardless their proficiencies in terms of acquisition of the target language.

On the other hand, In order to investigate the theoretical and practical level of students in primary in Taiwan, Woo et al (2009) wanted to integrate web 2.0 technologies with writing lessons.

This study used a case study approach to look for the benefits that a wiki produces on young learners of English as a second language. The goal was to create a piece of writing in which students developed their writing skills. For those activities they used the wiki tool so that students collaborate one to each other. After the detailed analysis of the different groups they found that most of the difficulties were related to content, such as adding, reorganizing, replacing and elaborating ideas rather than form such as syntax, spelling and punctuation.

Finally, a low frequency of comments and edits posted on the wiki platform indicated a warning signal that collaboration was not working. Teachers needed to assist group members in sharing and helping each other to create a learning community, or to assign roles so that each member has a role to play. Although the wiki technology affordances may provide the

opportunity for writers to focus on content, it will not happen automatically, and a teacher's role becomes ever more important in directing students to the right skill.

### **3.6. Genre-Based Approach to Teach Writing**

One of the approaches that have been used in order to help students learn a language is the genre based approach. Genre in Systemic Functional linguistic (SFL) focuses on the function and the sequence of the genres and the relations between context and language (Martin, 1992). In this manner, it is important that teachers organize and choose the appropriate activity for the students taking into account what they can work inside or outside the class.

In a foreign language class, the situation of the context plays a significant role, since the general idea is that teachers can teach based on a real environment in which students are involved (Figuereido, 2010). That means activities are based on what students know and manage with the idea that they can produce assigned texts easily.

According to Hyon (1996), current genre theories have developed in three research areas: English for specific purposes (ESP), North American New Rhetoric studies, and Australian systematic functional linguistics. The first one focuses on discourse features and structures. In the new rhetoric, the genre is seen as a form of social action that is centered not on the substance or on the form of the discourse but on the action it is used to accomplish (Miller, 1994). The last one about systematic functional linguistic exposes:

In functional linguistic, Genre approach is a theory of how we use language to live, it tries to describe the ways in which we mobilize the language- how out all of the things we might do with language, each culture chooses just a few, and enacts them over and over again- slowly adding to the repertoire as needs arise and slowly dropping things that aren't much use. Genre theory is a theory of the borders out of social world, and thus our familiarity with what to expect (Martin, 2000, as cited in Hyland, 2004, p.120)

Likewise, Hyland (2007) exposes “Genre refers to abstract, socially recognize ways of using language ... Members of a community usually have little difficulty in recognizing similarities in the texts they use frequently and are able to draw on their repeated experiences with such texts to read, understand, and perhaps write them relatively easy”

(P. 149) regarding that the proposal is based on writing and it is a skill that focus on expectations; the writer can predict what the reader expect in the texts based on previous text of the same type.

There are several conceptions about the genre approach; some of them are related to the integration of writing and reading with the context (Street, 1995). Hoey (2001), for instance, stated that Genre helps to know what are the connections with the other texts.

For the purpose of this proposal, the aim of including the genre approach in a lesson is to involve students in the process of composing a text of a particular genre, not simply on the text as product (Flowerdew, 1993).

Traditional approach, on the other hand, consists of following some steps during the process of writing, as Byrne (1988) explained. His sequence contains listing ideas, making an outline (scaffolding), writing a draft, correcting and improving the draft and writing the final version. There are other traditional writing activities as Controlled sentence construction, free composition and homework function (McDonough and Shaw, 2003). Taking into account how writing is considered will provide me the general idea about the teaching of this skill and the way to develop my proposal.

The Genre approach has various benefits for the language students and teachers. For learners, it integrates language, content and contexts. And for teachers, it is an easy way to

explain the different ways to write. Similarly, it lets teacher and learners have a clear idea about the intention of the writing rather than try different methods and correcting in the same way repeating the same experiences (Christie & Martin, 1997; Hyland, 2003a).

Taking into account the L2 learners needs, teachers can focus on process approach, genre based approach or an eclectic approach. The process approach has been used by several researchers and practitioners. Genre based approach offers learners plenty of opportunities to be conscious of the different commitments of written communication and the different ways in which information is organized inside the texts (Reppen, 1995).

Additionally, in Halliday's (1978) view, the context in the language teaching has important functions, such as substance which refers to learning a language, or as instrument in which learners learn through the language and as object that include the grammar, genre, etc. Also, the genre is moderately determined by the culture represented in the texts (Derewianka, 1990). As Knapp & Watkins (1994 ) state , "[Genre] considers how all parts of the text, such as paragraphs and sentences, are structured, organized and coded so as to make the text effective as written communication" ( p. 8).

In order to implement a genre approach, it is necessary to have elements such as planning learning, sequencing learning, supporting learning and assessing learning. Those elements provide teachers with the organization and scope of the course that they are developing. The first one lets students know what items they are going to learn and they can feel more involved in the lesson. The second one gives them the opportunity to know the order of those topics, in case they need preparation before the lesson. Learning support is constantly given by the teacher, due to the fact that writing is developed in a cycle in which students are receiving feedback and trying to correct and produce a better text. The last one is an integral part in the writing process. This is the reason why Hyland (2004) proposes a list of principles to assess students in the genre.

Table 3 Genre principles to assess student

Explicit	They provide explicit criteria for assessment and feedback
Integrative	They integrate teaching and assessment
Relevant	They are directly related to learners' writing goals
Competency	They specify student competencies and genre features
Preparedness	They ensure assessment occurs when students are best prepared for it

Genres help teachers to give feedback to students, due to the fact that they can recognize the problems students have in the writing process and plan the interventions students need. Thus, with genre approaches the teacher has an ongoing process of assessment.

As for the classroom practice, there are various principles which support the genre based approach and are a key element to design a lesson:

- Writing as a social activity; communication needs a purpose, a context and intended audience, so these aspects form the basis of the writing activities.
- Learning to write is needs-oriented; teacher has to do a need analysis about students' wants, the prior knowledge and the proficiencies of the students and also identify the kind of writing in the students.
- Learning to write requires explicit outcomes and expectations; Bernstein (1990) calls it "visible pedagogy", teachers need to know about what was studied, what will be studied and the expectation from the learners.



Additionally, it is important for writing teachers to make a connection between formal and functional properties that they teach in the classroom, in order to aid students figure out how and why linguistic conventions are used for particular rhetoric events (Bhatia, 1993).

Based on the reasons exposed above, it is clear that a teacher plays a significant role in the learning process. The teacher or instructor should explain to students how a language is used in real life for different purposes and different audiences. Moreover, the study of genres allows learners to understand the notion that certain genres may be used for certain ends. This can make them reflect not only about the knowledge learned but also about the way in which it is valued (Coe, 1994). As a matter of fact, it is relevant that teachers encourage learners to reflect about the purpose of language and its uses.

### **3.6.1. Types of texts**

In the designing of a writing course, it is important to define the type of texts that students should produce. Some of the text types are descriptive, recount and narrative. Each of them is elaborated below (Kress, 1993).

#### **3.6.1.1. Descriptive text.**

The main purpose of a descriptive text is to identify the features of some objects and describe those features (Martin and Rose, 2008). The schema includes identification and description. The former gives general information and explains what aspects will be described. The latter, on the other hand, is the completed information organized by sections. Those sections can be organized from the most to the least important.

### **3.6.1.2. Recount**

Recount is the text that focuses on retelling past events in writing or speaking. The idea is to tell what happened and when it happened. The stages of recount are orientation, events and reorientation. In orientation it is necessary to give a background to understand the text. Events include the characters of the events, the place and the time, (Anderson and Anderson, 1997).

According to Derewianka (2003), recount is subdivided in three types:

1. Personal Recount: It retells an activity that the writer or speaker has been involved in. For instance they are: oral anecdote and diary entry.
2. Factual Recount: It records the particulars of an incident such as report of a science experiment, police report, news report and historical account
3. Imaginative Recount: It takes on an imaginary role and gives details of events. For example: a day in a life of Roman slave.

Other authors that expose some of the recount types are Feez and Joyce (1998). For them the types of recount are different: biographical, historical and historical account. The biographical deals with what happened in the past and focuses on one person's life. The historical recount on the contrary is based on a group of people that lived in a historical period. A historical account aims to show why things happened in the past and to evaluate what happened in the past.

### **3.6.1.3. Narrative**

A narrative is a text which tells a story. The main purpose is that readers be interested in the story. It can explore different things, cultural values or problems (John, 2002). This type of text has some linguistic features as the use of specific characters. Participants can be animals or humans. Also, it uses sequence of time, links and past tense; as well as many action verbs to

express the processes. The different stories are created based on science fiction, horror, adventure, or comedy.

Narrative texts also have different stages as orientation, complication, evaluation, resolution, and coda. The orientation can be a picture, an opening chapter or a paragraph. In the compilation the readers discover the problems of the story. In the third stage of narrative which is evaluation, the story has to show suspense about what will happen. The evaluation makes that readers think about what happened to the characters (Christie and Derewianka, 2008).

In the resolution, the problem is solved for better or for worse, but it sometimes is unresolved. The last step, coda can be optional. The idea of coda is to offer a comment about the story and the future of the characters.

After having analyzed the different features of the Genre approach, I consider this approach is appropriate for my proposal due to the fact that students will be asked to construct different types of written text. It is also suitable to match task based instruction which is used in the project too.

## **4. COURSE DESIGN WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WIKIS**

### **4.1. Approaches to Course Design**

English has become a universal language, so educational systems have been having changes through the years, including English learning in their curricula in order to cope with the demand of English speakers around the globe. Factors such as social, cognitive, political and economic have also influenced the contemporary educational society. Nowadays, institutions have the aim of educating people not only with appropriate knowledge but also with values. Currently, language teachers are not just instructors of a language, they should also take into consideration the human part of their learners.

English Language teaching implies some bases which are the different approaches, methods and strategies to conduct the teaching aim. The approaches are the principles through which teachers should guide their practice. For that reason, it is necessary to adopt some approaches to education, language and learning. To begin with, educational approaches are divided in two: hermeneutic and epistemological. The first one focuses on the students' development of autonomy, building of their own knowledge. The second one, according to Freire (1968), refers to banking which means that students should be filled with knowledge by the teachers and then they will use it in the future life.

Concerning the approaches to language, there exist two: Structuralist and Functionalist. Structuralist is based on the study of morphology and syntax, grammar rules, production of accurate sentences, in other words linguistic competence. One of the pioneers of this approach is Chomsky (2001) who sees the language as a ruled based behavior and assumes that its object of study is the abstract language system.

On the other hand, the functionalist approach takes into account the communicative competence as the goal of language teaching in which the student has the opportunity to appropriate the language and put it into practice in real context, as well as to use procedures and strategies to acquire the four skills with the development of meaningful tasks. It believes that language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process (Cook, 1998).

When teaching a language, it is essential for the learner to use the language communicatively in the two ways speaking and writing and the functionalist approach involves those skills when it integrates the social, cognitive, pragmatic discourse features into its theory of the language system. Thus, as a teacher, it is relevant to provide students with learning strategies, but to do so, the teacher should know about the different approaches to learning which are organized in behaviorist, socio-cultural and cognitive approach.

The behaviorist approach to learning states that students can control learning by responding to stimuli in their environment. These stimuli could be positive or negative. Watson (1913) was the first Psychology who studied the behaviorist approach with his work “the Behaviorist Views It”. He claims that Behaviorism happens through conditioning between humans and environment. People acquired behaviors through those conditions.

Regarding that Positive or negative stimulus- response, Skinner (nd) developed a model called operant conditioning. It consisted on producing responses to the appropriate situation. He classified the reinforcement in two types:

Table 4 Types of reinforcement

<b>Positive Reinforcement:</b>	<b>Negative Reinforcement:</b>
It's a reward. Increase the possibility of occur again.	Removing an unpleasant situation.

Taken from theories of learning in educational psychology. Skinner (n.d)

On the other hand, the cognitivist approach encourages students to construct knowledge and use several strategies (Skehan, 1998)

Finally, the sociocultural approach places great importance in the learning through interaction with others. Vygotsky (1979) discussed the importance of cultural tools in the learning process. Culture items such as computers, books, and traditional those teach children about the expectations of the group, by participating in the cultural events and using the tools of the society.

#### **4.2. Chosen Approaches**

Taking into account that the approaches have different emphases, not all of them are suitable for all contexts. For that reason, it is necessary to take the positive aspects of each one of them and use them based on the reality of the institution, that is, the target needs, students' expectations, materials and the context in which they are involved, in order to design an appropriate course. Bearing this mind, it is relevant to mention that Corporación Universitaria Del Caribe CECAR is a private higher education institution which institutional policies are interested in the strategic plan for integration and communication technology ( PLANESTIC) organized by the minister of education. According to the background of this context and the results from the data collection, it is necessary to adopt

some approaches to education, language and learning, in order to create the tool for improving writing in English.

Regarding educational approaches, the hermeneutic approach is a good option for this context, due to the fact that it places an important role on students, especially when developing autonomy in the different activities and tasks they perform. Also, it allows them to construct their knowledge based on their context and their experiences. In our role as teachers, we should encourage them to build their own knowledge and to be autonomous in order to be integral people. It is relevant to mention that autonomy involves the capacity to use independent thinking as the basis for making decisions and accepting responsibility for the consequences of those decisions.

Concerning language approaches, the most suitable is functionalist. Based on the nature of the project, this approach helps the teacher to identify the learners' needs and analyze them in order to design a syllabus. In addition, functionalist approach develops communicative competence based on writing texts, and learners write different types of texts, such as letters, descriptions, and stories. Therefore, it focuses on the real context too. The activities created for this proposal were developed with their own context in this sense they were appropriate of their setting.

With regard to learning approaches, cognitivist and sociocultural are both necessary in the design of the course. Cognitivist due to the fact that students develop different cognitive skills those are basic in any wiki project. Among these skills are: writing and constructive editing skills, web skill, group process skills with the use of the technology tools.

Sociocultural approach will be used to promote interaction among members of a dispersed community with the objective of interacting among others and share information and knowledge.

After having analyzed the results from the surveys applied to the students, it is relevant to expose the goals and objectives of this syllabus taking into account the students' needs, wants and lacks. According to the results, these are the improvement of writing skills to create new texts, the use technology tools and the difficulties in writing skills. The proposal for the course has some characteristics that are relevant at the time of its development. First of all, integration of technology with the language course, which is the first innovation at CECAR after the initial stage of PLANESTIC; second, the use of the tool promotes collaboration; and finally students construct new texts based on their experiences and prior knowledge.

Students working with wikis need to develop several values and characteristics in order to contribute a successful online environment of collaboration. Those are:

**Openness:** Learners in a wiki need to be open not only to suggestions but also to modifying, organizing and improving contributions (Tapscott and Williams, 2006)

**Integrity:** it is important that learners build trust in all the works and respect other members' ideas (Duarte and Synder, 2001)

#### **4.3. Goals and Objectives of the Course**

After the analysis of all the instruments of data collection and the theories presented in the theoretical framework, it is necessary to make decisions about goals and objectives to improve writing skills in CECAR Language Center level low B1. The goals and objectives are exposed in the following chart.

Table 5 Goals and Objectives of the course



<b>Goals</b>	<b>Objectives</b> (Students should be able to)
Language: Improvement of Writing skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the wiki tool to create short descriptive texts.</li> <li>• Produce narrative texts.</li> </ul>
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Description of a person.</li> <li>• Recognize the elements of a story</li> <li>• Description of a place/building</li> </ul>
Human: Development of tolerance towards others' ideas and contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop tolerance towards others' ideas and contributions.</li> </ul>

#### 4.4. Teaching Points

The following are the teaching points resulting from goals and objectives.

1. The vocabulary related to mysterious and strange events
2. The structure of a story.
3. The use of linking words (connectors)
4. The use of tenses ( past and present)
5. The elements of a description

6. The use of cognitive skills.(writing and constructing editing skills)
7. The tolerance between opinions and ideas from members of a group.

#### 4.5. Syllabus Focus

To design a course in language teaching it is relevant to determine the way in which we are going to achieve it. That is, to know what steps we need to follow, and it is here where the syllabus is applicable. According to Hutchinson (1987) “the syllabus is a working document that should be used flexibly and appropriately to maximize the aims and processes of learning” (p. 94)

After having analyzed the target needs and situational constraints of the course, it is possible to select a syllabus focus for my course design. In order to choose the appropriate syllabus, it is necessary to establish some differences among syllabuses.

Taking into account the list of syllabus proposal by Richards (1990) as

- **Structural:** This is recognized as the traditional syllabus, writing courses are organized around grammar and sentence patterns.

The focus of this syllabus is on the final product. That means, the content is organized based on the complexity and simplicity of the grammar items.

- **Functional:** the principal emphasis of this syllabus is the communicative purpose and the conceptual meaning of language.

The tasks can be organized in, describing, telling a story, writing autobiography, comparing and contrasting. The content is teaching based on a number of functions that are performed using the language (Brumfit and Johnson, 1979)

Thus, the functional syllabus pursues that learner communicates through the language. Another important aspect concerning this syllabus is that students have the necessity to explore and analyze the different types of interaction in which they are involved (White, 1988).

A needs analysis is very important in this type of syllabus.

- **Topical:** the course is organized around themes: health, education, etc.
- **Situational:** the essential is the organization of the situation. A situation usually includes several participants who are involved in some activity in a particular setting. Activities are about situational transactions: applying for a job, writing a business letter. Moreover, in this syllabus the circumstances are more important than grammatical lessons. One of the advantages is that it focuses on the learner rather than subject (Wilkins, 1976).
- **Skills and processes:** this syllabus emphasis on teach a language through the development of several skills. The tasks are established to develop process and skills and linguistic competencies as vocabulary, grammar (Breen, 1984a).
- **Tasks:** In this syllabus, learners are encouraged to use tasks and activities to achieve a purpose. Activities are as producing a class magazine, producing a play. The most important aspect in the syllabus is that activities be meaningful for the learner needs.

After having analyzed the different syllabus for a writing course and the approaches that should be followed in the wiki page, it is time to select the appropriate syllabus focus for the course. In order to choose the most applicable, it is pertinent to compare what each model offers to the purpose of the wiki page. Based on the main features of each one and taking into consideration the target class, the most suitable syllabuses for the improvement of writing skills using a wiki tools is the functional and task. The former is appropriate because students are

developing some functions based on rhetorical situations in which they are involved to communicate through the language. The latter, on the other hand, is suitable because all of the activities proposed are tasks in which learners have to achieve a goal.

Collaborative learning is another pillar in this project because students show that they enjoy working in groups and wiki tool helps them to do it. Based on the mission and vision of the institution which search for the integration of technology with the language lessons, wiki tool fits perfectly with that policy. As this syllabus focuses on the development of writing skills, it was decided to choose the genre approach to writing due to the relation between context and language.

This course design uses descriptive writing texts and narrative texts as a way to encourage students to construct new stories based on their preferences and description of places which are suitable with the genre exposed because it focuses on the cultural context of the language. It determines how the language is used in a specific setting.

#### **4.6. Specific Objectives**

Those are the specific objectives:

Table 6 Specific Objectives

<b>Unit 1:</b>	<b>Unit 2:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving general information about the person.(Wiki tool)</li> <li>• Using the present simple to describe</li> <li>• Using several adjectives in the description to do it more vivid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking about mysterious and strange events</li> <li>• Creating a story using past tenses</li> <li>• Using linking words to sequence past actions and events.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing an informal letter including a narrative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing the physical appearance and personality of the characters.</li> <li>• Designing the context of the story including elements such as when, where</li> <li>• Writing an email based on prompts (informal)</li> <li>• Writing a story.(wiki tool)</li> <li>• Using the present simple to describe the place.</li> <li>• Using past simple to talk about the history of the place.</li> <li>• Using several adjectives in the description to do it more vivid.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Content:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing a person (wiki tool)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Content:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing a place or building (wiki tool)</li> <li>• Recognizing the elements of a story</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Human:</b> Developing tolerance towards other's ideas and contributions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Human:</b> Developing tolerance towards other's ideas and contributions.</li> </ul>

#### **4.7. Course Methodology**

The methodology of the course is organized based on the collaborative and cooperative learning.

The project was organized in different phases.

##### **4.7.1. Phase one**

##### **4.7.1.1. Online survey**

In order to analyze the situation I applied an online survey. This survey was applied to know students' interest about the way to develop writing. This instrument consisted on six online questions about students wants on the English class (writing skill), Also it intended to define the needs of students. After the application of the survey, I had a clear idea about student's interest.

Table 7 The results of the survey

	Questions
1	How do you feel about writing?
2	When it comes writing, which option do you prefer? Using technology or traditional way.
3	Do you know, what is a wiki ? Do you know how to interact in this site
4	Do think that is it time –consuming working with wikis? Answer this one only if you had worked with wikis.
5	Do you use internet ( such as online dictionaries, google, translators ) to help you write?

##### **4.7.1.2. Learning needs.**

Students feel more relaxed when writing in a web page because they think they are not pressured with a paper, and they do not have a time limit to write about their opinions and ideas.

In the results we can see that the most of them prefer to use the technology when developing this skill. However, that does not mean those writing activities cannot develop in a traditional way.

#### **4.7.1.3. Target needs.**

Students at the Language Center like to write in English and they think it will be important in the future. They like to write in English but they need to use different strategies as online dictionaries, and other technology tools. Writing is one of the productive skills of the English Language and they think it will be useful for their future jobs.

Finally, students want to improve their writing skills but by using different strategies and resources, because they spend enough time on the internet, and they prefer to write on internet rather than on paper. I think this is one of the most important aspects of my intervention.

#### **4.7.2. Phase two**

##### **4.7.2.1. Training sesión**

In 2012 students before starting using the wiki, had a training session two weeks. Those session consist on explain them how wiki works, also the structure of the different activities they must developed. From all six students, five participated in the complete wiki. Teacher showed them some examples of the creation of the story, the design a brochure and the description of a place.

#### **4.7.3. Phase Three**

##### **4.7.3.1. Work inside the wiki.**

The web page of the writing activities was in a platform located at ([http:// pbworks.com](http://pbworks.com)). The development of all the process took five weeks. Students had several activities inside the page, it contained several subpages; the agenda, the activities, course, evaluations, teams. They

had to revise every day the activities and develop them. All tasks were in groups. There were two groups inside the wiki. Each group had 3 students with different roles as secretary, leader and timekeeper. Every single task group change, every student had a role inside the group, leader, secretary and timekeeper. Then, students did all the tasks in the wiki page, which is an open, collaborative community website where anyone can contribute adding information in an easy way. At the end of all wiki, they did a peer evaluation to know their skills and weaknesses as groups.

The activities were the following:

1. Design a touristic brochure about Sucre department.
  - Voting session
  - Decision about the topic
  - Assignment of responsibilities
  - Writing about the place.
2. Create a story based on their preferences, using the key elements and the stages of the writing process.
  - Designing the context
  - Created the characters of the story
  - Write the complete story following all the stages

#### **4.7.4. Procedure**

For the development of those activities students had to watch videos, read and look for information about the places to describe and the story to construct. Students used an online survey to express how they felt with the activity, and what expectations they had with the use of the tool. With all of these sources the teacher collected the information, in order to check if there



was a positive impact on students' performance and interest in writing activities, with the purpose of reflecting upon it and design a new action plan.

#### **4.8. Teacher's Role**

Taking into account the type of project, the teacher is sometimes an online instructor, who follows some steps to prepare the students to work with a wiki. In the collaborative approach the teacher assigns some roles to the learners (Gordon and Stephens, 2007). The goal with the wiki work is to develop the cognitive skills in a collaborative way.

It was necessary to train the students before starting to work with the wiki page. Several wiki models were shown in order to know the way it works and the tools it contains. The instructor will be a guide of the learning process who gives permanent feedback to the students in order to facilitate the process.

The teacher provides students with opportunities to interact and use the language with a purpose. That's why another one of the roles of the teacher is creating meaningful activities which include the use of collaborative work. Likewise, the teacher is a planner of the course. The teacher plans an agenda inside of the wiki in which students can see the deadline and the instructions for each one of the tasks. Although, this agenda is flexible, the goal is for learners to follow the dates, activities and the objectives.

Moreover, as it was exposed above, the role of the teacher is very important in this project since students had to construct new knowledge based on the input that they received.

#### **4.9. Learners' Role**

Since the wiki promotes constructivist approach. Students should be active participants in the tasks developed inside the page. In this course, learners can construct their own knowledge

about the different topics. They should work in groups in a cooperative and collaborative way analyzing and creating new knowledge based on their ideas and experiences.

Furthermore they become problem solvers of the different situations presented inside the wiki. This allows them to gain confidence in the written works if they are working in a group to develop a specific activity. Wiki atmosphere lets them to think creatively when they try to achieve a goal using several strategies. So, the aim is to work out any problems within the group instead of waiting for the solutions.

Students have the opportunity to discuss with their team, defend their ideas, reflect on changes or reinforce their knowledge. As developers of communication and collaboration skills they should listen to others' ideas and help them.

For instance, the role of the students is dynamic and interactive since they interact with the teacher, with the wiki, the online environment and the classmates. On the other hand, as suggested by Frodesen (1995) it is necessary to encourage the students to evaluate their learning, and it is a tool to do not make they feel as cultural outsiders.

#### **4.10. Evaluation**

Evaluation and assessment process are key parts of the course in order to make the best decision for the improvement of learning of writing skill.

Evaluation is a process that should have a clear purpose. It is necessary to know if the evaluation is applied to find problems, solve problems, provide information being taking place, or decide efficacy of a program (Brinkerhoff, 1983)

As Lynch (1996) exposes, evaluation is a systematic process that attempts to collect information to make judgments or decisions. This evaluation lets to observe the important aspects as the goals and the effectiveness of the course.

Evaluation should be applied to teachers, students, materials and the procedure; that means, to all of the participants in the process. According to Stufflebeam (1985), evaluation should be an ongoing process to check the implementation of a plan.

#### **4.11. Students' assessment**

It is relevant to include an assessment of students on evaluation process. The assessment refers to all the activities and strategies used by the teacher to help and know students' progress. Taking into account that assessment is divided in two types; formative and summative, the evaluation of the course will be based on both. CECAR language center requires a student's mark on skills class and also teachers made a continuous feedback on students' progress inside the wiki. This assessment includes the design of some instruments to examine the progress. Regarding this project, the instruments that were designed for the assessment were two writing rubrics. Also, as it was exposed before this project based on collaborative learning too, at the end of the course students assessed their teams with a peer assessment evaluation which was organize inside the wiki. This teamwork assessment includes communication, responsibility for tasks, time management and cooperation among member. The goal of this assessment was that students learn valuable skills as reflection, analysis and fairness. As Brown and Knight (1994) claim assessment is not a process done to them, on the contrary is a participative process in which they are involved.

In addition, students will correct their own mistakes in the different tasks. An evaluation sheet will be provided to check, revise again and circle the correct answer. In this page students will be able to see their progress on their activities in the wiki and in writing skill as well.

#### **4.12. Materials**

Materials have one of the most relevant roles in the learning process because the teacher needs to have the resources to build up their teaching, to plan, create and guide the learner in the search for the knowledge. As Tomlinson (1998) argues, materials evaluation is the way to measure how a teaching material works.

Materials evaluation implies that teacher takes into account aspects such as learners' needs and context to assess the materials with the correct criteria. For that reason, the teacher should get acquainted with his or her context and be aware of all the aspects to be considered for the evaluation in order to provide students with the appropriate materials.

Therefore, it is really useful for teachers to know the diverse approaches to materials analysis so that he or she can choose which ones are more suitable for the evaluation. "Locally based approach can match materials appropriately to the context in which they are going to be used and the needs and interest of the teacher and learner who work within it, to find the best possible match between them" (Rudby, 2003, as cited in Angell, 2008. p. 37). Teachers need to research about different ways to evaluate the materials and determine which one will provide them with more information about the quality and pertinence of the materials in his or her context. Often times, already existing approaches might be only a guide for the teacher to create his own method to evaluate the materials, according to what he or she expects from the textbook or any other classroom support that he or she is going to use.

On the other hand, according to Ellis and Sinclair (1989), materials should cover learner-training activities which help students to discover learning strategies that suit them best and they can be more responsible for their own learning.

There was a variety of texts in the models of the lesson plans. For the first lesson, the teacher based on the model proposed by the book, some letters and description of famous

characters that students were going to study in the skills class. After this, there were some samples for writing each of those activities. Other texts (e.g. stories) were in websites. The letters, for example, had the same pattern to write it. The structure was divided in greeting, opening paragraph, main part closing paragraph and signing off. The lesson two was focused on descriptive texts. For this lesson, some texts were on the book too, others were taken from web pages. They were printed and students revised the structure. Both materials about texts were chosen taking into account the goals and objectives to be achieved. The teacher explained specific information such as organization and content of the description of a person. Those play a fundamental role in the activities.

Likewise, the teacher used other resources for the implementation of the project; those were online and printed stories. Some of them, such as presentations of online stories, were selected according to the task that students were developing. The teacher shows the design of a context, the parts of a story, and the linking words that should be used in the creation of a story using a projector.

It is relevant to mention that all of those materials were used to develop a training session with students some days before starting to use the wiki. The wiki page was one of the resources on which students worked more. All the decisions made concerning material selection was according to the goals and objective of the course.

This is the representation of the syllabus and the lesson for the course.

**4.13. The Syllabus**

CORPORACION UNIVERSITARIA DEL CARIBE- CECAR					
LEVEL B1 ENGLISH PROGRAM					
NAME OF THE COURSE: SKILLS AND GRAMMAR				LEVEL: B1	
UNITS: 2					
GOALS:					
Target Goal: Improvement of writing Skill					
Learning Goal: Encouragement of writing skill					
Human Goal: Develop tolerance towards other’s ideas and contributions.					
Unit 1: Heroes					
Objectives: Students should be able to...					
Language:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Giving general information about the person.</li><li>Use the present simple to describe</li><li>Use several adjectives in the description to do it more vivid.</li></ul>					
Content:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Describe a person.</li></ul>					
Topics	Genre and Text	Linguistic features	Strategies	Evaluation	Institutional Aims
History	Narratives	Past Simple	Ask about	Ongoing	Understanding of
Superheroes			students	Process	topics as daily
Adventure	An extract	Past simple	heroes.		routine or Works

	from a novel set in Medieval England.  A radio interview about cartons.  Three short texts about everyday heroes.	vs past progressive  Descriptive vocabulary Organization and content of a description of a person.	Read and analyses some descriptions.  Look interactive places.  Work inside the wiki.	Rubrics  Peer Evaluation	related to the language.
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**Unit 2:** That's strange

**Objectives:** Students should be able to...

**Language:**

- Talk about mysterious and strange events
- Create a story using past tenses
- Use linking words to sequence past actions and events.
- Describe the physical appearance and personality of the characters.
- Design the context of the story including elements such as when, where, etc
- Use the present simple to describe the place.

- Use past simple to talk about the history of the place.
- Use several adjectives in the description to do it more vivid.

**Content:**

- Recognize the elements of a story
- Describe a place/building

Topic	Genre and Text	Linguistic features	Strategies	Evaluation	Institutional aims
Mystery	<b>Descriptive</b>	Present	Unscramble	Ongoing	Writing of
Strange		Tense simple	of stories	Process	coherent texts
events	An extract				using complex
	from the	Past	Ask about	Rubrics	structures.
Places,	book <i>the</i>	progressive	students	Peer	Describe
buildings and	<i>phantom of</i>		heroes.	Evaluation	experiences or
landmarks	<i>the opera.</i>	Past perfect			different events.
		simple	Read		
	Cinderella		descriptions		
	story.	Past simple	of places.		
	The push in	Descriptive	Look		
	boots story.	vocabulary	interactive		
			places.		
	Rapunzel	Linking			
	story	words/	Work inside		



		phrases.	the wiki.		
	Images of touristic places				

#### 4.14. The Lesson Plans

##### 4.14.1. Lesson plan 1

Name of the teacher: **Beatriz Cardenas Cardenas**

Number of students: **6**

Average ages of Students: **18- 23**

Unit Number: 2:

Level of students: **Low (b1)**

**Objectives:** Students should be able to...

**Language:**

- Giving general information about the person.
- Use the present simple to describe
- Use several adjectives in the description to do it more vivid.

**Content:**

- Description of a person.

Class Stage	Objective	Activities students will perform and teacher's procedure	Materials	Allotted time and Type of interaction
Warm up activity	<p>To activate Sts Background knowledge</p> <p>To prepare Sts for writing tasks</p>	<p>The teacher (T) will asks the students (Sts) the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When do you hear the word “hero” who comes to your mind?</li> <li>• What do you prefer reading, history books or adventures books?</li> <li>• What kind of people do you admire?</li> <li>• Who is the person that you admire most?</li> <li>• Why do you admire him, her?</li> </ul>	<p>An extract from a novel set in Medieval England.</p> <p>A radio interview about cartons.</p>	<p>2 hours</p> <p>Teacher(t) – Students (sts)</p>

Presentation	To help sts understand the organization and content of the description of a person.	T gives sts three short texts and they have to read them, after she explains that each of them corresponds to one of the paragraphs of the description.  Those description is compound by  Introduction  Main part  Conclusion.  Also, T writes on the board some sentences and students have to matching with the correct paragraph.	Three short texts about everyday heroes.  ( traveller book unit 2).	30 minutes  T- Sts  Sts- Sts
Presentation	Raise awareness of the descriptive vocabulary.	Teacher gives to students a short description and asked them to underline the adjective they found. After that she shows a list of adjectives	Traveller book unit 2	20 minutes  Sts- sts
Practice	Give Sts	T asked sts to write the		1 hour

	practice in writing a description of a person.	description of the person they most admire. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give some general information about the person.</li> <li>• Describe the person's character.</li> <li>• Describe the physical appearance.</li> </ul>		T- sts
Evaluation	Check the process of the description.	T will evaluate the description taking into account the elements, and the correct punctuation.	Rubrics for writing stories. <a href="http://www.rubistar.4teachers.org">www.rubistar.4teachers.org</a>	30 minutes  Sts-Sts  T- Sts

#### 4.14.2. Lesson Plan 2

Name of the teacher: **Beatriz Cardenas Cardenas**

Number of students: **6**

Average ages of Students: **18-23**

Unit Number: 5: That's strange

Level of students: **Low (b1)**

**Objectives:** Students should be able to...

**Language:**

- Talk about mysterious and strange events
- Use properly the Past Simple Tense to Create a story
- Use linking words to sequence events.

**Personal Aims:**

- Recognize the elements of a story
- Participate actively in class
- Recognize and use grammar structure of past tense and verbs properly.
- Develop tolerance towards other's ideas and contributions.
- Develop the independence.

Class Stage	Objective	Activities students will perform and teacher's procedure	Materials	Allotted time and Type of interaction
Warm ups	To discuss about students preferences talking about stories.	<p>The teacher ( t ) asked students about what type of stories they like most.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• antastic</li> <li>• rama</li> </ul>	Traveller book unit 5	<p>1 day</p> <p>T- sts</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>istory</p>		
Presentation	To identify past simple tenses.	T will ask sts to read a letter and underline the tenses.	Traveller book unit 5	1 day T- sts
	To recognize time words in a written story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>asks sts to brainstorm time words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>ts read a short story and they have to circle the correct time word.</p>	Traveller book unit 5.	T-sts  1 day
	To identify the elements of a story	<p>T will teach Sts the Elements of a story.</p> <p>She shows and explains to them the</p>	<a href="http://www.learner.org/interactives/story/cinderella.html">http://www.learner.org/interactives/story/cinderella.html</a>  video beam	1 day T- Sts Sts- Sts

		different elements, (context, sequence, exposition, climax and resolution) Then, T will provide Sts with some stories in disorder which they will organize taking into account those elements.	Printed stories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• he push in boots story</li> <li>• apunzel story</li> </ul>	
Presentation	To recognize the parts of the context.	T will explains Sts that context is compound by the place and the time in which story occurred. She shows the context of snow white and seven dwarves.	Printed story of the snow white and seven Dwarves	1 day T-sts Sts- sts
Practice	To design the context of the story	Right after T will ask Sts to develop the first activity to design	<a href="http://www.pbworks.com/">www.pbworks.com/</a> <a href="http://writingskillscec">http://writingskillscec</a>	Sts- sts 1 week

	using wiki page	the setting in the wiki page. Students enter to their folders teams and create new pages with the setting.	<a href="http://ar.pbworks.com/w/page/security/52723981/FrontPage">ar.pbworks.com/w/page/security/52723981/FrontPage</a>	
	To describe the characters of the story.	Next, Sts will build the story characters.	<a href="http://www.pbworks.com/">www.pbworks.com/</a> <a href="http://writingskillscec.ar.pbworks.com/w/page/security/52723981/FrontPage">http://writingskillscec.ar.pbworks.com/w/page/security/52723981/FrontPage</a>	Sts- sts  4 days
	To create the complete story	Finally, Sts will create the complete story in the wiki page taking into account all the stages.	<a href="http://www.pbworks.com/">www.pbworks.com/</a> <a href="http://writingskillscec.ar.pbworks.com/w/page/security/52723981/FrontPage">http://writingskillscec.ar.pbworks.com/w/page/security/52723981/FrontPage</a>	Sts – sts  4 days



			<a href="#">ontPage</a>	
Evaluation	To check the whole process of the creation stories.	T will evaluate the story taking into account the elements, the liking words and the correct punctuation.	Rubrics for writing stories. <a href="http://www.rubistar.4teachers.org">www.rubistar.4teachers.org</a>	T- sts 1 day
	To evaluate the wiki environment.	Sts will be asked to complete the peer evaluation in order to know interaction and contribution among all the members of the group.	Peer evaluation chart	Sts- sts

#### 4.14.3. Lesson Plan 3

Name of the teacher: **Beatriz Cardenas Cardenas**

Number of students: **6**

Average ages of Students: **18- 23**

Unit Number: 5: **that's strange**

Level of students: **Low (b1)**

**Objectives:** Students should be able to...

**Language:**

- Use the present simple to describe the place.
- Use past simple to talk about the history of the place.
- Use several adjectives in the description to do it more vivid.

**Content:**

- Description of a place/building.

Class Stage	Objective	Activities students will perform and teacher's procedure	Materials	Allotted time and Type of interaction
Warm up activity	<p>Activate Sts Background knowledge</p> <p>To prepare Sts for writing tasks</p>	<p>The teacher (T) will asks the students (Sts) the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What places or landmarks attract visitors in your department?</li> <li>• What is special</li> </ul>	Images of touristic places	<p>30 minutes</p> <p>Teacher(t) – Students (sts)</p>

		<p>about them?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you had the opportunity to visit a famous place which would you choose? Why?</li> </ul>		
Presentation	Understand the main points of a description.	T asks sts to read the description of Bran Castle and then students are going to answer the following question. Is it a place you would like to visit? Why /why not?	Reading text	<p>30 minutes</p> <p>T- Sts</p> <p>Sts- Sts</p>
Presentation	Identify sequence and paragraph content in a description of a place/	Teacher shows a set of phrases that correspond to each paragraph in the description. Right after students have to	Power point presentation	<p>20 minutes</p> <p>T-sts</p> <p>Sts- sts</p>

	building.	<p>found each phrase in the correct paragraph.</p> <p>The phrases are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Says what the place is worth visiting and makes a general comment about it. ( opening paragraph)</li><li>• Says what makes the place special and describes the atmosphere. (Main part)</li><li>• Mentions the important features of the place and what</li></ul>		
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		<p>you can see</p> <p>and do there.</p> <p>( main part)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say the location of the place and gives general information about it.( conclusion)</li> </ul>		
Practice	Give sts practice in writing a description of a place.	<p>T asks sts to prepare a tourist information brochure for their town "Sucre" including the beaches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They should include: local customs, best restaurants,</li> </ul>	<a href="http://pbworks.com">www.http/pbworks.com</a>	<p>Sts-sts</p> <p>A week</p>

		top five hotels and the variety of food.		
Evaluation	Check the process of the description  Evaluate the effectiveness of the task.	T will evaluate the description taking into account the elements, and the correct punctuation.	<a href="http://www.rubrics.com">www.rubrics.com</a>	Two days  Sts-Sts   T- Sts

## **5. PILOTING**

### **5.1. General Information**

The goal of the piloting was to evaluate the implementation, effectiveness, and impact of my proposal. I piloted three lessons plans of my course design. In the first lesson, the activity was to design a touristic brochure about Sucre. In the second lesson, students had to describe a person. In the last lesson, students had to write a complete story.

The wiki work lasted five weeks. In this time students were interacting with the tool while carrying out their writing tasks, and also they were taking their face to face skills classes. The wiki was divided in different subpages: FrontPage, agenda, course, syllabus, activities, teams and evaluation. The front page showed the welcome to students. The agenda had the time limit for each activity, the description and the name of the session. There were nine sessions inside the page. The Course contained the members of each team and the roles of the students in the groups. The roles were leader, secretary and timekeeper.

The syllabus had the goal of the wiki, the description of the project in general and assessment, that was divided in collaborative skills and writing skills. The Activities section described the main tasks that student had to develop. Those activities were story and touristic brochure. There were two teams A and B. The last subpage that was evaluation contained the peer assessment chart and the writing rubrics.

### **5.2. Piloting Procedure**

Students had a training session two weeks before starting to work on the wiki.

During the training session students worked inside the classroom. In the first part of this lesson students weren't so motivated. Then they worked at the computer lab and they felt animated and they wanted to continue working. In the same weeks of the training session the teacher explained the structure of a description of a place with a worksheet. The teacher showed to students three short texts, they read them, and revised the structure using the genre based approach as a model. It had introduction, main part and conclusion. Also, they learned some adjectives that texts contained. Regarding the structure of the description of a person, students practiced the description with several samples with some texts provided by the teacher.

To create the story students had to learn the different types of stories as fantastic, drama or mystery. Also the teacher explained that stories were written in past tense. Students read a list of connectors and finally organized a story that was unscrambled. Then, students started working on the wiki. After the training session and the piloting of the first activity I had to explain again how the wiki works, because students felt confused with some tools inside the page. The second activity was divided in three micro assignments.

Table 8 Micro assignments from the story

1)Describe the characters of the story
2)Design the context
3) Create the complete story based on their experiences and preferences.

After they described the characters, they constructed the setting and finally they wrote the story taking into account the structure. In this activity students demonstrated they understood and enjoyed the activity developed by the teacher inside the page. In the second activity, they could get into the page in an easy way because they managed the parts of the wiki.



At the end of the wiki, a printed survey was applied. The goal of this survey was to know if the wiki tool had had a positive impact on students. It contained nine questions with four items: from strongly agree as the highest percentage, then agree with a bit lower percentage, disagree with a lower percentage and strongly disagree as the lowest percentage.

### **5.3. Limitations**

One of the limitations at the beginning students were not familiar with the wiki environment, thus it interfering with the first activity.

Another is that this class is divided in two sessions, grammar and skills. Each session lasts one hour and a half. So In a regular session, students started working on the writing activity and they had to stop and change the class. They wanted to continue all three hours working in the wiki. However there was a limitation with the time during this piloting.

### **Evaluation of the proposal of the wiki.**

The frequency with which students entered the page was registered in order to examine the students' motivation and engagement. The writing process of the activities was measured through the application of different rubrics with the items they should include.

Two rubrics were designed for students to carry out a self-assessment procedure of their writing skills. The rubrics for students were developed in a scale from 1 to 4, students had to assess if they applied all parts of the structure, correct grammar and spelling in the story writing and in the description of the touristic brochure.

Despite the fact that they had several mistakes with the grammar and spelling in general, students demonstrated they knew the structures of the writing tasks. The second activity results showed students could construct the setting and describe the characters very well. However, they

had some issues to establish the conflict. Taking into account those results, the brochure and the story were given back to the students with the mistakes but at the same time with the possible solutions so that they could reread, notice the mistakes and correct them. Those activities were developed in printed worksheet. Most of them agreed to read the activities again and tried to correct them. In general, students were happy with the use of the wiki. Only one student preferred the traditional method, so it was necessary to motivate and encourage him to do each activity. Regarding materials, it is relevant to mention that most of them were online, the survey, some stories were interactive, and the rest of activities were inside the wiki tool. Students expressed they liked the tasks proposed by the teacher. Also, the most interesting resource for them was the use of interactive pages to learn the structure of the writing texts.

To measure if the wiki was an appropriate tool, as I explained above, a record of the times students were inside the wiki was taken. Most of the tasks were developed inside the page, which means students did them at their time and pace. In order to examine students' improvement of writing, their production was evaluated taking into account the quality of content using the rubrics mentioned before. It is relevant to mention that the role of the teacher in this process was a guide, a mediator between the wiki work and the students.

#### **5.4. The survey for students**

Two surveys were designed in order to collect information about students' reactions and feelings towards the wiki. Before using the wiki, an online survey was applied to know students' preferences about writing. It had five questions, the comments of the open questions were read to recognize common ideas by the participants. Items were quantified using descriptive statistics. The post survey was designed to understand students' atmosphere at the web page, their perception about learning digital skills and their feelings about writing in English when using the

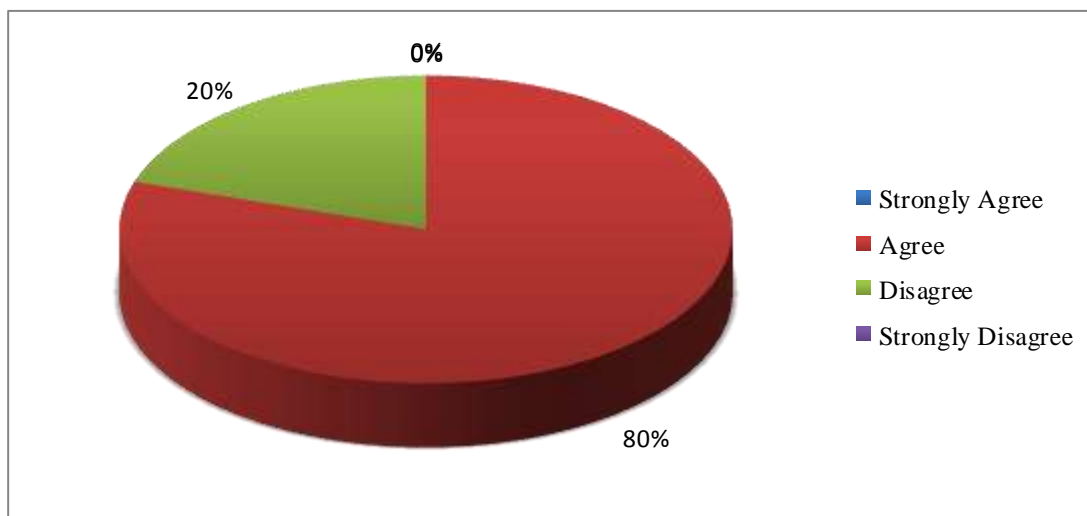
wiki. Also, it helped to know if there was a positive impact with the tasks developed and the technological tools applied. It was answered after working on and creating the final version of the story and the brochure.

### 5.5. Peer Assessment Chart

In order to examine Collaboration between members of the teams, a peer assessment chart was designed inside the wiki. Also, students expressed their feelings with their classmates contributions and their perception about the wiki environment inside the chart. This instrument was applied in order to involve students in taking more responsibility for their learning.

### 5.6. Printed Survey Results

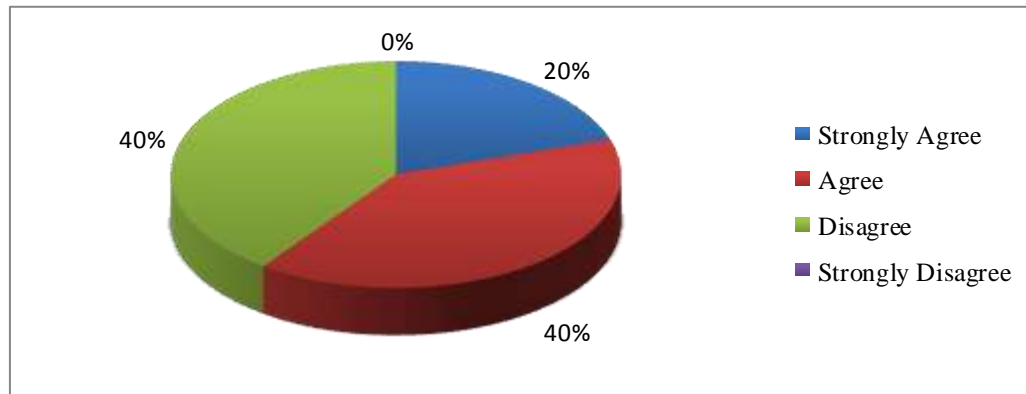
1. Activities designed in the wiki allowed to achieve the objectives proposed in each of the units.



Most of students agreed with the activities developed inside the wiki. The other percentage answered that they disagreed with the activities. Considering those results, it is possible to deduce that it is necessary to develop different strategies and resources including

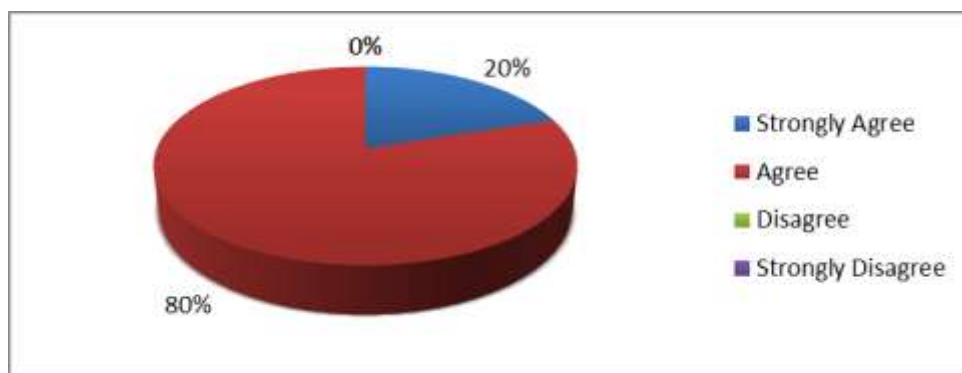
those technological ones such as blogs and wikis in the writing activities in order for students to feel free at writing time.

2. Through the wiki I could develop my writing skills in a more fun way.



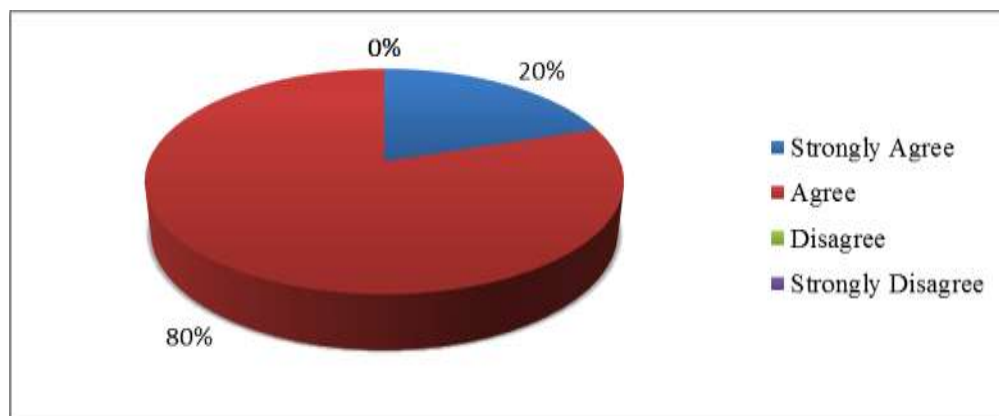
In the question referring to the development of the writing in a fun way, a forty percent agreed, same percentage disagreed and 20 percent strongly agreed explaining that they enjoyed the activities. Hence, it is important to use different technological tools as well as strategies in the teaching of a specific skill such as writing, reading, etc. and also it is necessary to organize the activities better according to the skill to vary them in order to enhance the learner's motivation.

3. Working with my classmates in a collaborative way helped my learning.



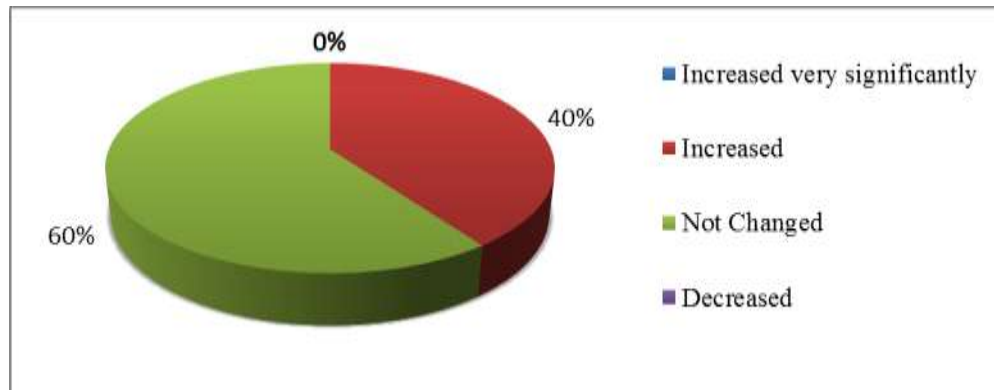
All of the students liked to work in a collaborative way. Eighty percent of the students answered that they agreed and the remaining 20% strongly agreed. Therefore, students showed great acceptance to work with their classmates and it is relevant if we take into account that the wiki was based on the collaborative and cooperative learning approach.

4. Do you think that wikis promote the writing skills?



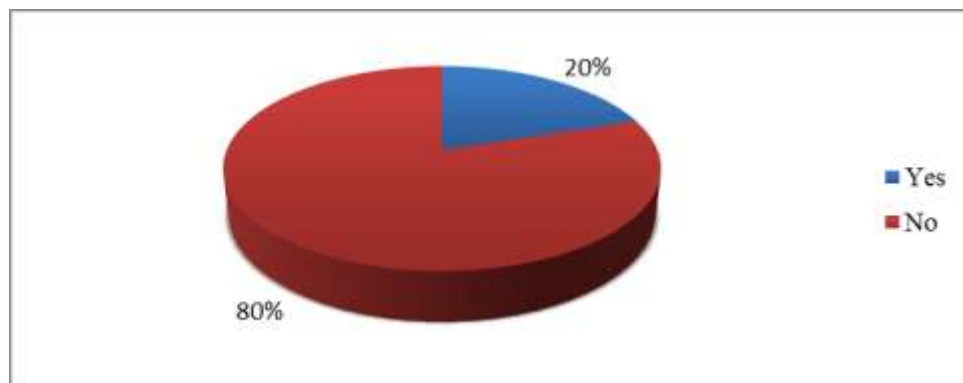
All of the students think that that wikis promote the development of writing skills. 80 percent agreed and the rest strongly agreed with those types of strategies. This answer is key to demonstrate the impact of the wiki to achieve its main purposed of developing students writing skills.

5. What do you think about the time dedicated outside the classroom?



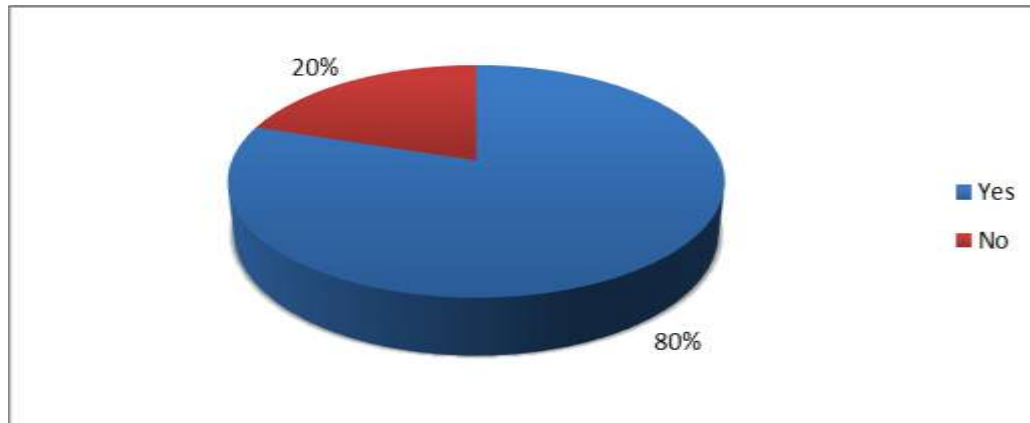
Concerning this question, it is pertinent to explain that even though just a forty percent of students think the time working outside increased and the sixty percent says did not change, the teacher can use both strategies, traditional and technological as a way to include variation to its writing classes.

6. Did you have experience using tools to promote collaborative work before working on the wiki?



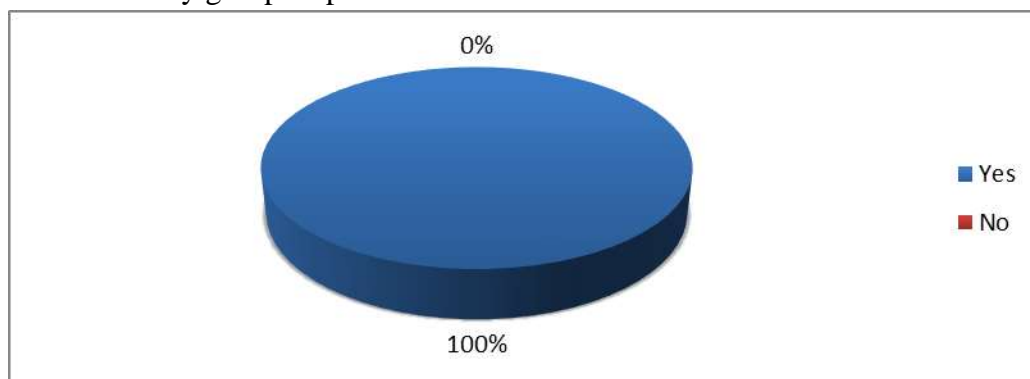
Regarding the students experience working with wikis, for most of them it was the first time working with this tool, just 20 percent answered they had some experience before. It shows that students need to interact more using this type of tools.

7. Did you enjoy writing on the wiki?



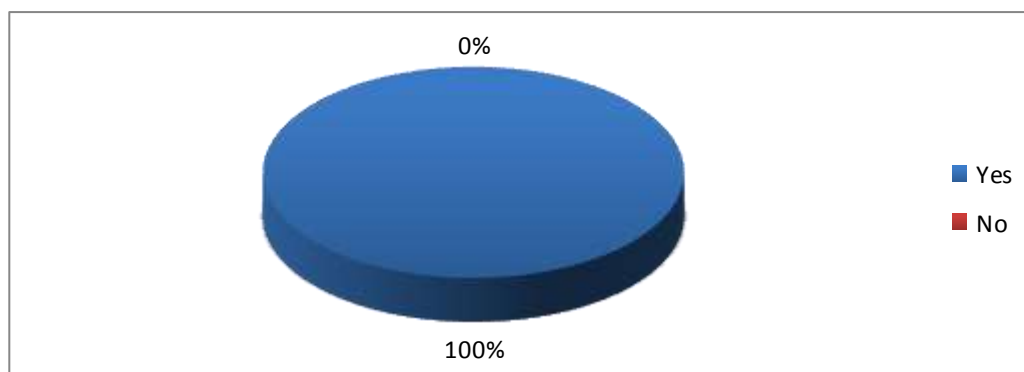
An eighty percent says they enjoyed working with the wikis. However, other 20% answered no. This means that the activities implemented had a good perception among students which may have contributed to enhance their motivation towards writing. Regarding 20 % is necessary to develop different and activities including traditional and use several resources.

8. Did my group help each other in the wiki?



All of them answered yes and it shows there is a great acceptance to work and help other friends in group work.

9. Did my teacher help me and my group a lot?



All  
of

Students answered yes, the teacher helped them a lot. The feedback teacher does in the process is very important because it is a new experience for students and they always have several doubts in the development of the activities and especially, with the use of those kinds of tools as blogs and wikis.

Results from this research showed that learners enjoyed writing. Learners also had the opportunity to be in contact with technological tools that fostered their digital skills. Collaborative learning was another important result from this experience. Learners developed a sense of partnership and a friendly learning atmosphere.

## **CONCLUSION**

The development of this proposal gave me the opportunity to know in detail my target context and identified the characteristics necessities and interests. After I had this information about the level and the needs was viable to design the course, to create the tools and activities to my students. Furthermore, I read about some approaches as genre based and theories as constructivism, collaborative and cooperative learning which provide me the elements necessary for my teaching process.

Throughout the development of my proposal I had to try with new applications that helped me to be aware of the use of new technologies in the English Language teaching. As a personal reflection about the wikis, I consider that it is important to give the appropriate feedback to student in order to encourage them to write and express their ideas using the wiki. He is a facilitator during the process that should monitor each one of the activity while students are



working on the wiki. Second, it is necessary to create an online environment in which students feel comfortable with their post, opinions and do not feel scared about comments or changes. Students need enough time to get to know how wiki works.

Most of the students became less dependent from the teacher and were responsible with the activities. They share activities with their groups. Thus is necessary to help learners understand the difference between traditional writing activities and writing on the wiki. Wiki writing tasks not only improve spelling, grammar and writing skills, they motivate learners to reflect upon them through the interaction.

Furthermore, after analyzed the results from the piloting I consider CECAR Language Center can plan writing activities based on their syllabus and on students' interest too. Maybe writing is not considering one of the important skills based on the idea that this Center focus has emphasized on the Speaking and Listening abilities giving importance and a leading role to the Communicative Approach, thus leaving a gap when dealing with writing. Learners should be motivated to develop and improve their writing abilities with the use of several strategies and tools.

Finally, I want to state that this proposal is the beginning to other teachers that want to use technologies in their English language process.

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## **7. APPENDICES**

### **7.1. Appendix 1 List of tables**

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## **7.2. Appendix 2 List of Figures**

Figure 1 Learning Pyramid

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### 7.3. Appendix 3 Writing Rubric for Story

Story Writing : Story wiki					
<b>Teacher Name:</b> Betty Cardenas					
<b>Student Name:</b>					
CATEGORY	4 - Strong	3 - Developing	2 - Weak	1 - Not yet there	Points
Problem /conflict	It is very easy for the reader to understand the problem the main characters face and why it is a problem.	It is fairly easy for the reader to understand the problem the main characters face and why it is a problem.	It is fairly easy for the reader to understand the problem the main characters face but it is not clear why it is a problem.	It is not clear what problem the main characters face.	
Spelling and punctuation	There are no spelling or punctuation errors in the final draft. Character and place names that the author invented are spelled consistently throughout.	There is one spelling or punctuation error in the final draft.	There are 2-3 spelling and punctuation errors in the final draft.	The final draft has more than 3 spelling and punctuation errors.	
Setting	Many vivid, descriptive words are used to tell when and where the story took place.	Some vivid, descriptive words are used to tell the audience when and where the story took place.	The reader can figure out when and where the story took place, but the author didn't supply much detail.	The reader has trouble figuring out when and where the story took place.	

Resolution	The solution to the character's problem is easy to understand, and is logical. There are no loose ends.	The solution to the character's problem is easy to understand, and is somewhat logical.	The solution to the character's problem is a little hard to understand.	No solution is attempted or it is impossible to understand.	
Characters	The main characters are named and clearly described in text as well as pictures. Most readers could describe the characters accurately.	The main characters are named and described. Most readers would have some idea of what the characters looked like.	The main characters are named. The reader knows very little about the characters.	It is hard to tell who the main characters are.	
Organization	The story is very well organized. One idea or scene follows another in a logical sequence with clear transitions.	The story is pretty well organized. One idea or scene may seem out of place. Clear transitions are used.	The story is a little hard to follow. The transitions are sometimes not clear.	Ideas and scenes seem to be randomly arranged.	

#### 7.4. Appendix 4 Writing Rubric For A Brochure

<b>CECAR</b>					
<i>Touristic brochure</i>					
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Teacher:</b> <u>Betty Cardenas</u>				
<b>Date Submitted:</b>	Title of Work:				
	<b>Criteria</b>				<b>Points</b>
	1	2	3	4	
<b>Organization</b>	Sequence of information is difficult to follow	Reader has difficulty following work because student jumps around	Student presents information in logical sequence which reader can follow	Information in logical, interesting sequence which reader can follow	
<b>Content Knowledge</b>	Student does not have grasp of information; student cannot answer questions about subject	Student is uncomfortable with content and is unable to demonstrate basic concepts	Student is at ease with content, but fails to elaborate.	Student demonstrates full knowledge about Sucre (more than required).	
<b>Grammar and Spelling</b>	Work has four or more spelling errors and/or grammatical errors.	Presentation has three misspellings and/or grammatical errors.	Presentation has no more than two misspellings and/or grammatical errors	Presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors.	
<b>Description of features</b>	Work has no adjectives	Work has one or two adjectives.	Work has three or four adjectives to describe the places	Work has several adjectives to describe the places of the brochure	
				<b>Total</b>	

### 7.5. Appendix 5 Wiki 2: Correction of errors

**According to what you wrote in your brochure, read again and choose the correct option.**

Choose the correct answer from the options given

- 1 . a) Bascic    b) Basic    c) Bassic
2. a) Gastronomic Sucreña    b) Gastronomy Sucreña    c) Sucreña Gastronomy
3. a) Severals ways    b) Several ways    c) Several way
4. a) From the nearby villages    b) From the nearby of villages    c) Nearby of villages
5. a) Also never lacking in our diet is    b) Besides, our diets are never lacking in    c) Also, our diets are never lacking in
6. a) Sombreros vueltiaos    b) Hats vueltidos    c) Vueltaios Hats
7. a) Mecedora    b) Rocking chair    c) Armchair
8. a) Hammocks    b) Hummocks    c) Hamacas
9. a) A dress    b) Dresses    c) Dress
10. a) Golfo de Morrosquillo    b) Morrosquillo's Gulf    c) Gulf of Morrosquillo
11. a) This is located    b) These is located    c) This located
12. a) .Its    b) .It's    c) .It
13. a) Also exist    b) There also exist    c) Also there exist
14. a) Are tourists ports    b) Are tourist port    c) Are tourist ports
15. a) Besides .    b) Besides ,    c) Besides
16. a) Packeage tour    b) Package tour    c) Package tours
17. a) Coveñitas is a good place where    b) In Coveñitas is a good place where    c) On Coveñitas is a good place where

18. a) can practice kayak and   b) People can practice Kayak   c) Person can practice Kayak

19. a) Sunbathe   b) Sunshine   c) Sunfish

20. a) Ecotourist   b) Ecotourism   c) Ecotouristic

**7.6. Appendix 6 Objetivos estratégicos en el desarrollo de PLANESTIC**

1. Disponer de una infraestructura tecnológica apropiada que favorezca la innovación y posibilite la apropiación y uso de las TIC en los procesos educativos.
2. Contar con una comunidad académica consolidada que usa y apropia críticamente las TIC
3. Contar con una amplia oferta y cobertura educativa, con programas pertinentes y de calidad que incorporen el uso de las TIC y AVA, en articulación con el sector productivo.
4. Disponer de nuevos convenios interinstitucionales con entidades gubernamentales y del sector productivo, que involucren el uso de los medios y tecnologías de la información y la comunicación.